

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1** NAME

HISTORIC

Carrousel at Glen Echo Park

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

MacArthur Boulevard

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Glen Echo

VICINITY OF

8th

STATE

Maryland

CODE  
24

COUNTY

Montgomery

CODE

031

**3** CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4** AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (If applicable)

National Capital Region, National Park Service

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

VICINITY OF

STATE

D.C. 20242

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

National Park Service List of Classified Structures

DATE

1977

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDSHistoric Resource Services Division, National Capital Region, NPS  
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

# DESCRIPTION

M:35-39

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The carrousel at Glen Echo Park (formerly Glen Echo Amusement Park) consists of a suspended stage and canopy divided into 18 bays or segments. It contains 52 carved wooden animals in three concentric rings around the stage and two decorated circus chariots with fixed wheels, each having two seats. The animals include 39 horses, four ostriches, four rabbits, and a single deer, tiger, giraffe, and lion, all bearing fanciful saddles with colorful saddle blankets and harnesses. The carrousel and its accompanying Wurlitzer Band Organ are housed in a 12-sided building with a segmented domed roof.

The canopy of each of the 18 identical segments of the carrousel consists of a vaulted ceiling terminating on the inner end at an arched tympanum containing a cartouche with a shell and laurel leaves as decoration. Below each tympanum are supporting gold wooden foliated corbels. Below the corbels is a rectangular mirror in a gesso frame angled downward to reflect the animals and their riders. Separating the mirrors between segments are vertical foliated moldings bearing electric light bulbs; these moldings align with overhead beams, similarly lighted, extending out between the vaulted ceiling bays. Between the corbels and the mirrors is a lighted horizontal molding, and below the mirrors is a colorful festoon molding from which more light bulbs are suspended. Where the bays intersect, the festoon is broken by winged cherubs' heads in cartouches.

The wooden outer cornice of the canopy is elaborately carved and painted. It features 18 carved court jester heads in cartouches alternating with 18 gold gesso-framed mirrors. These motifs are tied together with exuberant curved baroque moldings. Electric light bulbs surround the cartouches and the gesso frames and line the underside of the curved molding along the bottom of the cornice. Each finely carved jester has a white face with a red or blue ruff and sleigh bells attached to its hair. The bottom molding is broken by a festoon of flowers below each jester and a classical head framed in laurel leaves beneath each mirror.

The mechanical operation of the carrousel is similar to that of post mills. The entire carrousel is supported by a vertical post braced by two cross-trees which are in turn braced by quarter bars between the post and cross-trees. As in mill construction, all of these members are jointed and bolted. At the top of the post is a thrust bearing to which is attached a series of iron tie rods descending in a diagonal manner. The carrousel is suspended from these rods, which attach to the 18 radiating canopy support arms. The centermost ends of these wooden arms are attached below a ring gear which is bushed from the central post. This gear meshes with 18 pinion gears at the ends of 18 horizontal cranks which, through double offsets, cause the two inner rings of animals suspended from them to rise and fall. Attached below these 18 radiating horizontal beams is a large sectional cast iron annular gear which is driven by a pinion gear atop the main vertical driveshaft. Power is applied to this shaft from an electric motor through a pair of bevel gears and a belt drive. There is a friction brake adjacent to the large pulley of the belt drive.

(continued)

M:35-39

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

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Lighting is supplied by three commutator rings located inside the annular drive gear, immediately below the 18 radiating arms. This allows all lights to burn regardless of the rotation of the carrousel (up to approximately 4.75 rpm).

The exterior of the carrousel house is suggestive of a 12-sided barn with large double doors at each bay. Each door contains glass panels and is bordered by overhead transoms and sidelights. The bays are separated by piers of stone up to approximately five feet and brick for another five feet. Jutting out from each pier is a wooden brace which supports a hammerbeam that rests on the upper portion of the pier. The hammerbeams support the lower, outer roof around the perimeter of the building as well as the 12 arched rafters of the raised central domed roof. These rafters consist of 2x6s bolted together and curved to form the vaulted line of the dome. To them are attached purlins supporting roof joists to which is attached sheathing forming the substructure for a composition shingle roof (not original). A wood-shingled drum fills the vertical space between the lower, outer roof and the central vaulted dome, which is bell-shaped in profile. The dome is topped by an ornamental metal finial.

A Wurlitzer Military Band Duplex Orchestral Organ, style no. 165, is located on one of the 12 interior walls of the carrousel house and accompanies the operation of the carrousel. Although this is probably not the organ originally installed, it is contemporary with the carrousel and an exceptionally fine example of such organs.

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Entertainment	

SPECIFIC DATES 1921

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Gustav and William Dentzel

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Glen Echo carrousel is significant as an exceptionally fine example of the art of carrousel building. Of some 200 carrousels in the United States of approximately the same vintage, it is among the top six or seven in quality. It appears to be the only carrousel of its age and quality remaining in its original location.

The carrousel was built in Philadelphia in 1921 by the firm of Gustav and William Dentzel, one of America's most prominent carrousel makers. Shortly thereafter it was shipped to the Glen Echo Amusement Park, which operated from the turn of the century until the late 1960s, and became a principal feature beloved by generations of Washington area children.

When the amusement park closed, the carrousel was sold to a Virginia collector. Aroused Glen Echo citizens raised the \$80,000 necessary to repurchase it for retention in the community. Shortly after the U.S. Government purchased the park property in 1970 for administration by the National Park Service as Glen Echo Park, the Park Service accepted title to the carrousel and the responsibility for maintaining and operating it. It continues in active use.

Of the Glen Echo Park features remaining from the amusement park period, only the carrousel and its house are presently judged to possess significance under the National Register criteria. The present environment of the carrousel does not contribute to its significance and is therefore excluded from this nomination.

**1 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Frederick Fried. "Last Ride for Carousel Figures?" Historic Preservation, July-September 1977.

Benjamin Levy. "Glen Echo Chautauqua on the Potomac." National Park Service Division of History, 1977.

"Return of the Glen Echo Carousel." Home/Life, The Washington Star, March 13, 1977, pp. 12-13.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,8 311,417,0,0 43 1 4 19,6,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The carrousel and its house are located in the center of Glen Echo Park. The National Register boundary coincides with the outer perimeter of the carrousel house.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE Gary Scott, Historian  
 Nicholas Veloz, Curator

ORGANIZATION National Capital Region, National Park Service DATE March 25, 1980

STREET & NUMBER 1100 Ohio Drive, S.W. TELEPHONE (202)426-6660

CITY OR TOWN Washington STATE D.C. 20242

**12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION**

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NONE \_\_\_\_\_

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is \_\_\_\_\_ National \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

# FALLS CHURCH QUADRANGLE VIRGINIA - MARYLAND 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

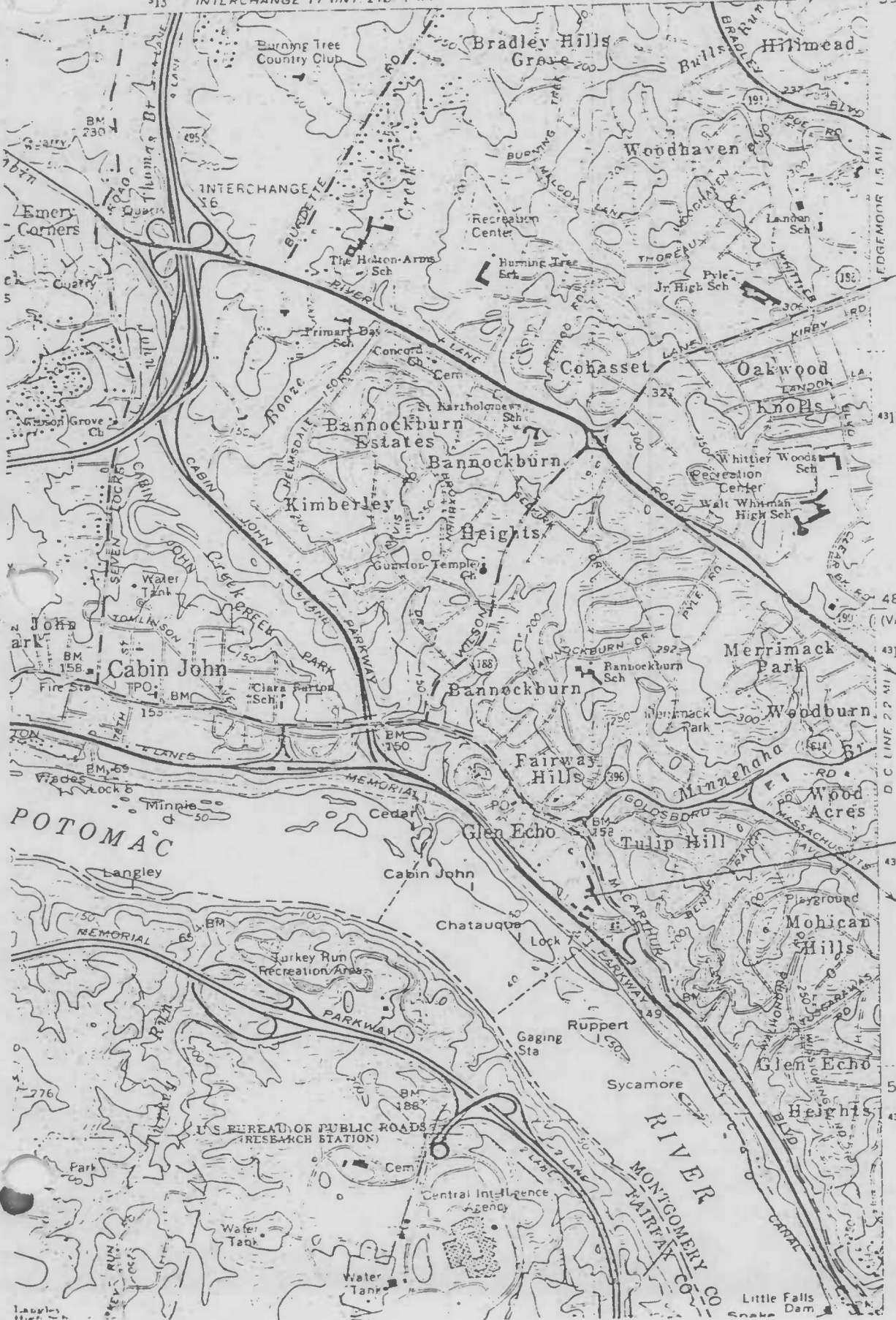
ELLANDS CORNER 1.9 MI

2 390 000 FEET (VA.) 77°07'30"

39°00'

313 INTERCHANGE 17 INT. 270 1 MI

M:35-39



27 MI. TO U.S. 240

EDGEMOOR 1.5 MI

4317

480 000 FEET (VA.)

4316

4315

4314

57°30"

4314

CAROUSEL AT  
GLEN ECHO  
UTM REFERENCE:  
18/314700/4314960

WESTMORELAND CIRCLE 8 MI  
DUPONT CIRCLE D.C. 9 MI